(c) As per the revised guidleines, the states were asked to submit fresh proposals. The Government of Punjab has yet to submit a fresh proposal in consonance with the revised guidelines.

Streamlining of clearance process of Customs Department

3214. DR. K. MALAISAMY: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) what are the measures taken by the customs department to streamline the existing clearance processes/procedures to facilitate easy clearance and augment customs revenue;

(b) whether there have been cases of evasion of duty and collusion of customs officials with evaders of duty. If so, what are the measures taken to check this malpractice;

(c) whether it is a fact that the delay in finalizing provisional assessment has led to postponement of revenue to Government to the tune of several crores of rupees; and

(d) if so, what are the effective measures initiated to avert such delays in future?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI S.S. PALANIMANICKAM): (a) Government has taken a number of steps to simplify the procedures in Customs clearance. Significant amongst them are introduction of 'Risk Management System' which allows selective screening of high risk cargo for Customs examination, Special Customs clearane for authorized persons having good track record on the basis of self assessment without examination, automated Customs transshipment permission waiving the requirement of bank Guarantee, disposal of goods throug e-auction. These measures help in simplified filing of documents, faster assessment and payment of duty, quick clearance of goods resulting in augmentation of Customs revenue.

(b) There are certain cases of evasion of duty reported on account of collusion of customs officials with evaders. Where ever cases of such nature are identified appropriate departmental action has been taken with the advice of Central Vigilance Commission and Chief Vigilance Officer. The Customs procedures are continuously streamlined, automated for enhancing transparency and cutting down interface with the trade to avert any malpractice.

(c) and (d) Provisional assessment is resorted to only if imported goods are to be tested or there is insufficient information on the goods, for the purpose of assessment of duty. However, the goods are cleared under provisional assessment only after obtaining suitable security for the deficient duty. Such assessments are finalized on receipt of test report or on submission of complete information.

Core Banking System for Public Sector Banks

3215. SHRI SANJAY RAUT: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) what are the customer-centric initiatives taken by the Public Sector banks to compete effectively with private sector and foreign banks in terms of the existing product portfolio on offer and introduction of new products and services to match those of its competitors;

(b) whether Government have issued any directions for adopting Core Banking/Any Branch Banking System to all Nationalized Public Sector Banks in the country; and

(c) if so, the details thereof and by when, it will be operational in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL): (a) to (c) Reserve Bank of India (RBI) have reported that Public Sector Banks have put in place several measures which would lead to better facilities to customers such as computerisation of branches, installation of ATMs, single window concept, time norms for important services, any branch banking, delivery channels like Electronic Clearing Service, Electronic Fund Transfer, Telebanking, Internet Banking Services etc.

RBI has issued instructions to all scheduled commercial banks on implementation of core banking solutions and has advised that the pace of internal computerization of branches of banks and their inter-connectivity, providing for core banking solutions or centralized database access/clustered solutions needs to be expedited.